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WORLD URBAN FORUM RECOGNISES ITALIAN SUPPORT FOR UN GLOBAL CITIES CAMPAIGN

World Urban Forum, NAPLES, 5 September 2012 – There was a special ceremony today at the World Urban Forum to mark Italy's strong participation in the two -year-old Making Cities Resilient Campaign with a formal signing ceremony for nine cities from the Basilicata Region and the commune of Bomporto which was severely damaged by the recent Emilia-Romagna earthquake.

Campaign coordinator for the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, (UNISDR), Helen Molin-Valdes said: "Bomporto and the cities of Roccanova and Castronuovo bring to 53 the number of Italian cities and municipalities which now actively support this campaign to make cities safer and better places to live despite the growing threat of natural hazards such as floods and earthquakes which have brought tragedy to many Italian homes in recent years.

"Italy has a deep tradition of voluntary service and emergency response. The country's appreciation of what is required to build resilience at community level to disasters is largely inspired by the National Civil Protection and associated groups such as Gruppo Lucano and individuals like the Mayor of Venice, Mr Giorgio Orsoni who is showing political leadership as the European Champion of the Campaign."

In addition to the cities of Roccanova and Castronuovo formally joining the Campaign, the cities of Guardia Perticara, Terranova di Pollino, Viggiano, San Costantino Albanese, Marsiconuovo, Banzi, Chiaromonte in the Basilicata Region, took part in a signing ceremony.

The organization Gruppo Lucano, associated with the Italian National Civil Protection, has been on the forefront in raising awareness on disaster risk reduction and supporting the UNISDR Campaign in the Basilicata Region (Lucania Region) located in the south of Italy with approximately 600.000 inhabitants.

The earthquake in Abruzzo 2010 and in Reggio Emilia in 2012 encouraged the Italian civil protection and the cities to enhance their work with prevention and education on disaster mitigation. Giuseppe Guarino, Head of training and Planning, Gruppo Lucano, said "The success of the Making Cities Resilient Campaign in Italy is based on building large networks of small communities with the same cultural heritage."

Luigi D'Angelo, Head of International Relations unit, said: "The Campaign is an important vehicle given Italy's 8,000 municipalities and the responsibility of the Mayors for Civil Protection."

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About UNISDR: UNISDR is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports implementation of the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* which seeks “the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.”

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